

For Immediate Release

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Governor Rauner Signs Veteran Preference Bill



SPRINGFIELD – Governor Bruce Rauner signed House Bill 3122 today creating the Veterans Preference in Private Employment Act, allowing private employers to voluntarily establish preference in employment for certain veterans.

“I am proud that Illinois is taking the initiative in helping veterans who often times face greater barriers when finding employment,” Governor Rauner said. “All of us have a responsibility to ensure that job opportunities are available to those who serve our country.”

The law, sponsored by Rep. Robert W. Pritchard (R-Hinckley), aims to reduce the unemployment rate for the more than 800,000 veterans in Illinois. By amending the Illinois Human Rights Act, it allows an employer to voluntarily establish a preference for hiring veterans as long as there is a publicly posted policy that is applied uniformly for all employment decisions regarding the hiring, promotion or retention of employees.

“Those that put their lives on the line and serve their country shouldn’t be forgotten when they take off their uniform and seek a job in the private sector,” Rep. Pritchard said. “While many private companies may want to hire veterans for their leadership, job skills and experience, they were cautious of violating laws against discrimination.”

The act applies to veterans of the five service branches, their reserve components, and the Illinois National Guard. Illinois law currently includes a veterans’ preference policy for public sector employment and protections against discrimination based on military status.

“I’m proud of our department’s role in passing this important legislation that provides greater opportunities for our veterans, and strengthens the Illinois Human Rights Act for all Illinoisans,” Illinois Department of Human Rights Director Rocco Claps said.

For more information on anti-discrimination laws and the Illinois Department of Human Rights, please visit www2.illinois.gov/dhr.

The Illinois Human Rights Act protects individuals from discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex (including sexual harassment and pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age (40 and over), marital status, disability, military status, familial status, sexual orientation (including gender identity) or unfavorable military discharge.

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